

Thank you for this opportunity to have my voice be heard.

My father in law Ron Mills took his first trip to White River in 1959. Ron was an 18 year old kid and a first year guide and packer. The camp is a 24 mile ride into the center of the Bob Marshall Wilderness. His story is the ultimate American dream. Starting out as a penniless 18 year old employee he never imagined he would become an owner of that camp with my husband Tucker in 1999. The camp is rich in history, with the first outfitter Gale Ballard starting up in 1933. Gale ran his outfit for 22 years, selling to Art Weikum in 1955 who spent 33 years before selling to Gary Duffy in 1988. Finally in 1999 we became the permit holders of this amazing location. Ron has years of blood sweat and tears to get to this stage. We have owned other camps, but this camp we have had for 14 years is home to us all. Some of the other camps Ron and Tucker have operated in have been relocated due to fires burning through the permitted site. It is quite amazing that this White River camp is still be visited by people from around the world EIGHTY YEARS later.

Our outfit operates full time, meaning we start in June and run through General Season. This is a very festive time in Augusta for all businesses. We rely heavily on tourism summer and fall. At one time there were seven robust wilderness operations out of Augusta operating full time, that number has been reduced to four that are making it. My husband and I are holding on tight burning the candle at both ends taking every side job we can in the off season while trying to promote our trips, book clients and take care of our horse and mule herd. I don't tell you this for sympathy, it is just part of territory. All my family is asking for is a chance to stay alive in this way of life that has been handed down. Tucker and I would love for our two teenage boys to have the option to continue living this life they love so much when they are adults too. I have never considered us gamblers, but in truth we are. Every year the gamble is praying we don't get burned out, that there will be hay and grass to feed our stock and that our hunters draw a license. Please support SB 380 we can't afford to lose hunters in the draw even one time.

Respectfully,

Amy Mills